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MORMONISM.

No. I.

THE CHARACTER OF ITS FOUNDER.

BY

H. P.

"Beware of False Prophets."—Matt. vii. 15.

LONDON:
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1865.

MANY Christians have an idea that Mormonism is either dead or dying; others think it too great a sacrifice to take notice of it. Notwithstanding, Mormonism is a reality. True, now and then, *apparently* it slumbers and sleeps, but it only does so in appearance; it is only to repair and recruit its strength, to attire itself in new apparel, to change its mode of procedure; for it is continuing to make a desperate struggle "to rise in the scale of its destiny."

What ought, then, to be done to impede its progress? Why, *expose it.* Fortunately, the Mormon publications and works of authority contain sufficient infidelity, immorality, and blasphemy to ruin such a soul-destroying system, even in the estimation of the most thoughtless and illiterate members of society. In this and the two following tracts somewhat extensive extracts from the same will be made; and in many instances a single note or remark would be superfluous and out of place. And surely the Mormons cannot find fault with us for adopting this course; for if they believe their publications to contain nothing but essential and inspired truth, they ought to be thankful and pleased to see the same widely cirlculated and extensively made known. And as to our making an occasional remark, that is only fair: besides, truth must prevail.

The earnest prayer of the writer is that God's blessing may accompany this feeble attempt, and make it instrumental in giving Mormonism—a system of inquiry and abomination—such an exposure as it most justly deserves.

MORMONISM.

I. *The Birth and Education of its Founder.*—On the 23rd of December, in the year 1805, at Sharon, Windsor County, in the State of Vermont, North America, was born one named Joseph Smith, jun. During his infancy and childhood nothing unnsual to that period of life happened to him. (Biographical Sketches, p. 73.) His education was much neglected, consequently he was ignorant of some of the ordinary branches of a common school education. (Biographical Sketches, p. 60.) In short, he could read and write without much difficulty; he had also a limited acquaintance with the elementary rules of arithmetic. These were his highest and only attainments. (Remarkable Visions, by Orson Pratt.)

II. *His anxiety to be prepared for a future state of existence.*—When about fourteen or fifteen years old he began seriously to reflect upon the necessity of being prepared for a future state of existence; but how or in what way to prepare himself was as yet a question not settled in his own mind. (Remark. Vis., by O. Pratt.) From this it appears that Joseph, when a youth, either did not believe in the Bible, or else paid but little attention to it. Had he, like Timothy, known the Holy Scriptures from a child, he would doubtless have found them sufficient, with God's blessing, to make him wise unto salvation. Hence his perplexity.

III. *His First Prayer and Pretended Vision.*—One morning early in the spring of the year 1820, while

in this dilemma, he went into the woods a short distance from his father's house, and for *the first time in his life prayed vocally.* (Biographical Sketches, p. 76.) While thus engaged he would have us believe that he saw, in a vision, God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ. Joseph is represented as saying—"*They* did in reality speak unto me, *or one* of them did." (History of J. Smith, Millennial Star, vol. 3, p. 21.) Joseph's memory being a little defective, he is not sure whether it was one or two persons who told him that all the religious societies on earth were teaching incorrect doctrines, and that he must join none of them. (Elder J. Jacque's Catechism, pp. 76, 77.) Now, with all deference to the *inspired elder* (the Mormon elders claim to be inspired), we confess we see no necessity for the appearance of God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ; for, if Joseph turned a deaf ear to the Word of God, contained in the Bible (and apparently he did) it is highly probable, if a second revelation of the mind and will of God had been given to him in person, it would have met with similar unbelief and contempt as that contained in the scripture of truth. Let us, however, for a moment suppose he had the vision, he does not seem to have paid but little if any attention to it, for he says, "Mingling with all kinds of society, I frequently fell into very foolish errors, and displayed the weakness of youth and the corruptions of human nature, which, I am sorry to say, led me into divers temptations, to the gratification of many appetites offensive in the sight of God." (Mill. Star, vol. 3. p. 93.)

IV. *The Angel Moroni's Visit to Joseph.*—On professing repentance for his disobedience, he was favoured with further revelations from God, and was accordingly visited by the angel Moroni on the night

of September 21st, 1823, who appeared three times for the purpose of giving him instruction and information respecting a record written upon gold plates, hid in a stone box, and deposited in the earth in the side of a hill called Cumorah, near Manchester, Ontario County. Joseph went accordingly to the place and made an attempt to get them out; but was interrupted by the appearance of the same angel, who told him the time for doing so was not come, but would be four years longer. (J. Jacque's Catechism, pp. 77, 78.) Strange to say, at the end of the four years, on September 22nd, 1827, the angel kindly saved Joseph the trouble of getting the plates, &c., for he brought them to him; and very likely knowing Joseph to be a suspicious character, charged him to keep them safe.

V. *Joseph's Ordination to the Aaronic Priesthood by John the Baptist.*—On the 15th day of May, 1829, the day of the Prophet's ordination made its appearance. Joseph and Oliver Cowdery went into the woods to pray, when, to their astonishment, John the Baptist came and laid his hands upon their heads, and ordained them to the Aaronic Priesthood. But what think you, reader? Joseph is represented as saying immediately after his ordination, "I laid my hands upon his (O. C.'s) head. and ordained him, afterwards he laid his hands on me, and ordained me." (Mill. Star, vol. 3, p. 48.) To say the least of this amusing incident, it puts one in mind of children playing at ordination. One thing is certain, they thought very little of their ordination by John the Baptist.

VI. *Joseph Founding the Church of Latter day Saints* (?).—This was done at Fayette, Seneca County, New York, on April 6th, 1830, which con-

sisted of six members ; but which very soon increased to thirty. In 1831 a settlement was founded in Lake County, Ohio, and another soon afterwards in Jackson County, Missouri. The saints were much persecuted, and finally had to leave Ohio in 1838, and in the winter of that year, and in 1839, they were driven from Missouri. They then settled on the Mississippi river, and built a beautiful city, which they called Nauvoo. Here they erected a temple, which was dedicated in May, 1846. (J. Jacque's Catechism, pp. 80, 81.)

VII. *The Prophet's Death.*—Their troubles were not yet ended, for Joseph Smith, their leader and head, was arrested on several charges of violence and acts of treason against the State of Illinois, and thrown into Carthage gaol, when a mob who were infuriated by the numerous crimes of the Mormons took the law into their own hands, and thus put into practice a doctrine taught in "the Book of Doctrines and Covenants," and shot him in the evening of June 27th, 1844. And after this so-called Prophet had been dead more than five years, Elder Hyde (speaking of course by inspiration) had the impudence to asrert at Manchester, October 17th, 1849, "that Joseph Smith is just as much the President of the Church now as ever he was." Consequently, if the head be dead, the whole body (or church) must be dead also. The Prophet's death, as might be expected, was greatly deplored by the Mormons ; the news was at once communicated to the Prophet's widow in a letter signed John Taylor and Willard Richards. Sidney Rigorn tried hard for the vacant place of the deceased; but Prophet (?) Brigham Young was appointed as Joseph's successor.

JOSEPH SMITH'S CHARACTER.

I. *Opinion of his Friends.*—In order to form a just opinion, we will endeavour to find out what his friends and disciples say and think of him. We read in Biographical Sketches, p. 296, in reference to Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum :

"Two so wise, so virtuous, great, and good,
Before on earth, at once, have never stood
Since the creation."

Elder E. W. Tullidge speaks of him as Brigham Young's matchless predecessor. (Mill. Star, vol. 23, p. 66.) "He is Christ's chosen representative and embodiment : he is, so to express it, the revelation and manifestion of God and Christ to mankind in these latter days." And again, "His work is a continuation of Christ and His Apostles, and he is the after-comer and representative of Christ." "The claim which we make for Joseph as *the mightiest of Prophets.*" (Mill. Star, vol. 23, pp. 67, 68.) "They [the Americans] have suffered one of the greatest, most renowned, and most celebrated Prophets that ever lived upon the earth to be murdered in cold blood." (Mill. Star, vol. 15, p. 178.)

II. *Joseph's Faults.*—Now, notwithstanding what his friends have said and written in his favour, it may for certain be inferred that Joseph knew himself better than his nearest and dearest of friends. And that he really did have his faults there can be no doubt, for he is represented as saying—"I have sometimes spoken *too harshly*, from the impulse of the moment, and inasmuch as I have wounded your feelings, brethren, I ask your forgiveness." (Mill. Star, vol. 15, p. 595.) Joseph Smith, then, occasionally, at all events, used to act and speak from the impulse of the moment, and now and then had to

beg the forgiveness of his brethren. Again, "The Lord poured out his Spirit upon us, and the brethren began to confess their *faults* one to the other, and the congregation was soon overwhelmed in tears, and *some of our hearts were too big for utterance.*" (Mill. Star, vol. 15, p. 596.) Joseph, then, the so-called "Representative of Christ," had his faults, but as his heart was too big to tell us what these faults were, we must try and ascertain them ourselves.

III. *The Prophet's Love of Money.*—From 1 Tim., chap. vi. and v. 10, we learn, "*The love* of money is the root of all evil." Now, if we succeed in proving Joseph a *lover* of money, that will decidedly be a fault in this so-called "Mightiest of Prophets," especially if we bear in mind Jesus, the *true* Prophet, who had nowhere to lay His head; and who, on one occasion, had to work a miracle in order to pay a certain tax. (Matt. xvii. 24-27. Joseph taught his followers that it was God's will they should "provide him with food and raiment, and *whatsoever he needeth.*" (Doc. and Cov., p. 129.) "It is wisdom in me that my servant, Martin Harris, should be an example unto the church in laying his *monies* before the bishop (Joseph) of the church; and this is a law unto every man that cometh unto this land to receive an inheritance, he shall do with his *monies* according as the law directs." (Doc. and Cov., p. 144.) Now, considering how highly the Mormons speak of Joseph, it is only reasonable to conclude they acted in accordance with his wishes and directions. And that they did so is evident from the following: "Elder Tanner brought me half of a fatted hog for the benefit of my family. A few days since, Elder S. Roundy brought me a quarter of beef. This day my brethren met, according to previous arrangement, to chop and haul

wood for me." "They (the brethren) have also been very industrious, and supplied me with my winter wood, for which I am sincerely grateful to each and every one of them." (Mill. Star, vol. 15, pp. 504, 505.) "Also, the brethren whose names are written below, opened their hearts in great liberality, and paid me, at the committee's store, the sums set opposite their respective names; to wit:—

	d.	c.		d.	c.
John Corrill	5	00	Salmon Gee	0	75
Levi Jackman	3	25	Harvey Stanley	1	00
Elijah Fordham	5	25	Zem. Draper	1	00
James Emmet	5	00	Emer Harris	1	00
Newel Knight	2	00	T. Jackson	1	00
Tru. O. Angel	3	00	Samuel Rolf	1	25
Wm. Felshaw	3	00	Elias Higbee	1	00
Albert Brown	3	00	George Morey	1	00
Wm. F. Cahoon	1	00	John Rudd	0	50
Harlow Crosier	0	50	Alex. Badlam	1	00
			Dollars	40	50

My heart swells with gratitude inexpressible when I realise the great condescension of my heavenly Father in opening the hearts of these my beloved brethren to *administer so liberally to my wants.* And I ask God, in the name of Jesus Christ, to multiply blessings without number upon their heads, and bless me with much wisdom and understanding, and dispose of me to the best advantage for my brethren, and the advancement of His cause and Kingdom. And whether my days are many or few, whether in life or in death, I say in my heart, O Lord, let me enjoy the society of such brethren." (Mill. Star, vol. 15, p. 504.)

IV. *The so-called Prophet Getting into Debt.*—Either he was very extravagant, and did not practise economy, or else his wants were so many and numerous, and his love of money so insatiable, that the saints despaired of ever giving him sufficient, and consequently gave up all hope of ever doing so; for this "celebrated Prophet" had to resort to the unenviable position of getting into debt. Hence, we read, "My heart is full of desire to-day (Sept. 23, 1835) to be blessed of the God of Abraham with prosperity, until I will be able to *pay all my debts*; for it is the delight of my soul to be honest." (Mill. Star, vol. 15, p. 342). There can be no doubt but what Joseph was well acquainted with "loans" and "promissory notes," for one Friday he went, "in company with Vinson Knight, and drew 350 dols. out of Painsville Bank, on three months' credit, for which we gave the names of F. G, Williams and Co., N. K. Whitney, John Johnson, and Vinson Knight." (Mill. Star, vol. 15, p. 503.) On another occasion Elder Packard advanced him twelve dollars on a promissory note, and James Aldrich lent him a similar amount in the same way; and both, probably seeing no signs of their ever having it back again, thought, perhaps, the best thing they could do under the circumstances was to write *settled*, and make Joseph a present of the same. Accordingly, we read that on one windy and chilly day, "Elder Packard came in this morning and made me a present of twelve dollars, which he held in a note against me. May God bless him for his liberality. Also James Aldrich sent me my note by the hand of Jessie Hitchcock, on which there was twelve dollars DUE; and may God bless him for his kindness to me." (Mill. Star, vol. 15, p. 504.)

V. *Joseph was doubtless idle.*—He gave the Mor-

mons a revelation which he pretended to have received from God in July, 1830, to this effect: "In temporal labours, thou (Smith) shalt not have strength, for this is not thy calling." (Doc. and Cov., p. 111.) This was doubtless intended to prevent the saints expecting the Prophet doing any laborious work. How different to Jesus, who went about doing good without fee or reward, whose meat and drink it was to do God's will. How different to the practice and teaching of the Apostle Paul, "If any would not work, neither should he eat." (2 Thess. iii. 8-10.)

VI.—*This "Mightiest of Prophets, was a Drunkard.*—The Rev. H. Caswall, P. D., Kemper College, Missouri, now vicar of Figheldean, Wilts, visited Nauvoo, and collected the following testimony on the spot: "A shop for the sale of ardent spirits having been established at Montrose, a small place opposite Nauvoo, over the river, the 'Prophet' was *often seen intoxicated* by persons who mentioned the fact to me. In September, 1841, Smith got drunk at this shop, and boasted to the people who were looking on that he could drink them all drunk. Another time . . . he was *thoroughly drunk*, and when asked how it was that he, 'a prophet of the Lord,' could *get drunk*, he answered that it was *necessary he should do so*, to prevent the saints from worshipping him as a God." "About the year 1840, at a political meeting in Nauvoo, Joseph became intoxicated, and was led home by his brother Hyrum." (Caswall's Mormonism and its Author, p. 8.) Let us hope that Joseph saw his folly before it was too late, and repented of his sins, for it is certain, from 1 Cor. vi. 10, 11, no drunkard can enter into the kingdom of Heaven. However, one thing is certain, he was not a "*total*

abstainer;" but on the other hand, *liked sufficient to make his heart glad.* And when we consider the place and circumstances of the following, it is more than probable that he was very fond of a "*drop.*" On Wednesday, March 30th, 1836, he says, "I ascended the pulpit, and remarked to the congregation that we had passed through many trials and afflictions since the organization of this church, and that this was a time of rejoicing, and that it was expedient for us to prepare bread and *wine sufficient to make our hearts glad.* To this end we should call on the brethren to make a contribution. The stewards passed round, and took up a *liberal* contribution, and messengers were despatched for bread and wine." (Mill. Star, vol. 15, p. 727.) Again, on Wednesday evening, July 20th, 1836, Joseph and his family were at a wedding party, and "three servers of glasses filled with wine" were presented to the Presidency "to bless," and the Prophet says, "it fell to my lot to attend to this duty, which I cheerfully discharged. It was then passed round in order . . . . suffice it to say our hearts were made glad . . . . . until we had taken *our fill;* and joy filled every bosom, and the countenances of old and young seemed to bloom alike with cheerfulness and smiles of youth . . . . this being a time of rejoicing, *we heartily embraced it, and conducted ourselves accordingly.* (Mill. Star., vol. 15, p. 59.)

VII. *Joseph Smith was a Profane Swearer,* and consequently an unlikely person to be a prophet of the Most High God. In one of his sermons at Montrose, speaking of some one who had said, "It was a pity she (Mrs. Smith) had not broken her neck," he said, "I hope I may never find out who made that remark, for if I do my appetite shall never be satisfied till I have his

blood. I will follow him as the hound follows the heart's blood of the hare; if ever he crosses my threshold I'll send him to *hell.*" (Three Days at Nauvoo, p. 51. By the Rev. H. Caswall.)

The following specimens are taken from the Mormon publications. "Before I will bear this unhallowed persecution any longer—before I will be dragged away among my enemies for trial, *I will spill the last drop of blood in my veins; and will see all my enemies in hell.*" Again, "I wish the lawyer who says we have no powers in Nauvoo may be choked to death with his own words." Again, "If any citizens of Illinois say that we shall not have our rights, treat them as strangers, and not friends, and *let them go to hell and be damned! Some say they will mob us; let them mob and be damned!*" "If mobs come upon you any more here, *dung your gardens with them*." (Joseph Smith, Mill. Star, vol. 21, pp. 330, 331.) How different to the language of Jesus, the true prophet and founder of Christianity, who said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse yon, do good to them that hate you." (Matthew v. 44.) What a vast difference between this coarse and blood-thirsty language of this so-called "most renowned" and "most celebrated prophet," to that of the Saviour, who prayed even for His murderers: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Surely such a man cannot be the "chosen representative and embodiment of Christ."

VIII. *Joseph Smith sanctioned stealing.*—In a revelation he pretended to have received from God it says: "Behold it is said in my laws, you are forbidden to get in debt to thine enemies; but *behold it is not said at any time, that the Lord should not*

take whom He please, and pay as it seemeth Him good; wherefore as ye are on the Lord's errand, and whatsoever ye do according to the will of the Lord is the Lord's business, and He hath set you to provide for His saints in these last days. (Doc. & Cov., sec. 21, par. 6.) Surely taking the property of another cannot be anything but stealing, and yet this is clearly taught in the above revelation, and that in opposition to the 8th commandment, which says, "Thou shalt not steal;" and that the saints understand this revelation in the same sense as we do, it is certain, for Mr. R. Cook, a Mormon preacher, in a discussion at Oldham, Lancashire, with Mr. G. W. Barber, said, "the cattle upon a thousand hills are the Lord's, and of course belong unto His saints." (Bowe's Mormonism Exposed, p. 16.) Leaving us to draw our own conclusion, such for instance, if a saint (?) wanted a horse, a sheep, or a cow, to take the first he came to.

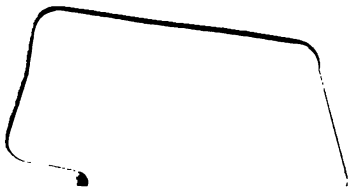
IX. *Joseph Smith was a Polygamist.*—Once he excommunicated an elder for preaching "Polygamy and other false and corrupt doctrines." (Mill. Star. vol. 20, p. 381.) But strange to say, in 1852-3, a revelation was published in favour of polygamy, and was found to contain the following command: "Let mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive *all those* that have *been given* unto my servant Joseph, and who are virtuous and pure before me." (The Seer, vol. 1, p. 11.) And to sum up the whole, we have Prophet Brigham Young's valuable testimony; he says, "The world has known long ago, even in Brother Joseph's days, that *he had more wives than one.*" (Mill. Star, vol. 15, supplement, p. 31.) "Brother Joseph," then, was a polygamist, "*he had more wives than one,*" in direct opposition to the Scriptures. In the beginning God created *one* female only for *one*

man. (Gen. ii, 18, 15.) And Malachi, chapter 2nd, and verses 14 to 17, although mainly directed against divorce, is equally applicable to polygamy. Divorce is bad, but evidently polygamy is very much worse. "The Prophet, in this and following verse, reminding the Jews of the first institution of marriage, protests against the idolatrous marriages of priests, *polygamy* and divorce." (Note on Mal. ii, 15, 16, Par. Bible Religious Tract Society.) "This passage has been considered to mean that the original institution of marriage was ordained for true love and undivided affection, and best serving to promote the religious education of children, while *polygamy is opposed to this result.*" (Poc. Commentary on Mal. ii. 15, R. Tract Society.) Again, in 1 Tim. iii. v. 2, we read, "A bishop, then, *must be blameless*, the husband of *one wife.*" "This neither means that a bishop or pastor is obliged to marry, nor that he ought never to marry a second wife, *but it is designed to guard against polygamy.*" (Note on 1 Tim. iii. 2, Par. Bible.) Again, "To say that a man should have *but one wife* would be naturally understood *as prohibiting polygamy.*" (Barnes' Notes, 1 Tim. iii. 2.)

Surely, then, "Brother Joseph could not be a prophet of the Most High God—a God of perfect purity and holiness. How unlike the Old Testament prophets, who were the divines, the philosophers, the instructors, and the *guides* of the Hebrews in *piety and virtue.* . . . . Their habitations and mode of life were plain, simple, and *consistent.*" (Eadie's Bib. Dic., p. 470.) The prophets of Israel were a very singular and *venerable order of men.* . . . . *They were men of eminent holiness.*" (Green's Bib. and Theo. Dic., p. 321, and 2 Pet. i. 21.) "The prophets were *eminently distinguished among the per-*

sons accounted holy by the Jews; they were raised up by God in an extraordinary manner for the performance of the most sacred functions." And, once more, "The prophets are *usually reckoned among sacred persons.*" (Horne's Compendious Introduction to the Study of the Bible, pp. 302, 378.) They (the prophets) appear to have been men of blameless character." (Par. Bible, p. 483.) The conclusion, then, to which we are compelled to come to is very different, indeed, to what the Mormons think and say of Joseph Smith. In short, we believe him to be one of the greatest impostors—a false prophet, a wolf in sheep's clothing—a man full of hypocrisy and iniquity, having eyes full of adultery, who through covetousness and feigned *words* made merchandise of thousands, and who has long since been called to give an account of his stewardship, and to be judged according to his works.

Dear Reader,—"Beware, then, of false prophets, who come in sheep's clothing. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Can a man take fire in his bosom and not be burned?" Certainly not—no more can we credit impostors with impunity. It is when we reject, doubt, and deny *the truth,* and have pleasure in unrighteousness—it is when we love darkness rather than light, because our deeds are evil, that God permits us to be carried away by error, and gives us up to credit tkat which is false. (2 Thess. ii. 10-12.)

Let us, then, without further delay, seek God's grace, and give our hearts to the Lord.

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